

**CLAIMS**

What is claim is:

- 1) A method for providing a promotion, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) obtaining a product having an alphanumeric sequence;
  - 10 (b) entering the alphanumeric sequence supplied with the product into a web page;
  - (c) validating the alphanumeric sequence;
  - (d) awarding a promotional value associated with the alphanumeric sequence;
  - 15 (e) choosing an item for purchase;
  - (j) redeeming the item based on the promotional value;  
and,
  - (k) purchasing the item.
- 20 2) The method of claim 1, wherein the promotional value is an electronic coupon.
- 3) The method of claim 1, wherein the alphanumeric sequence is positioned inside packaging of the product.

- 5           4) The method of claim 1, wherein the alphanumeric sequence  
is positioned on the package of the product.
- 10          5) The method of claim 1, wherein an address of a web site is  
associated with the alphanumeric sequence and the method further  
comprise the step of accessing a web page associated the web site.
- 15          6) The method of claim 1, wherein the item is a service.
- 20          7) The method of claim 2, wherein the validating step includes  
decoding the alphanumeric code to determine an associated  
electronic coupon.
- 8) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of  
collecting information from a buyer of the item.
- 9) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of using  
the information for marketing purposes.

- 5           10) The method of claim 1, wherein the choosing step includes  
accessing an online retailer web site.
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- 11) The method of claim 1, wherein the choosing step includes  
accessing an electronic warehouse.
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- 12) A method for providing a promotion, comprising the steps of:
- (a) applying an alphanumeric sequence to a product by a first retailer;
  - (b) selling the product by the first retailer to a user;
  - (c) accessing a web site on a first retailer processing device, by a user processing device;
  - (d) entering the alphanumeric sequence supplied with the product, by the user, into a web page of the web site;
  - (e) validating the alphanumeric sequence;

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  - (f) awarding a promotional value;
  - (g) accessing a web site on a second retailer processing device, by the user processing device;
  - (h) choosing, by the user, an item for purchase ;



- 5           18) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is  
increased responsive to the user answering a question.
- 10           19) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is  
increased responsive to a predetermined date.
- 15           20) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon  
step includes awarding a prize.
- 20           21) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon  
step includes activating internet money.
- 25           22) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon  
step includes providing the second retailer that will redeem  
the coupon.
- 30           23) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon  
step includes providing an opportunity to enter a sweepstake  
contest.

5 24) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon step includes providing the user with a visual game piece associated with the alphanumeric sequence, and wherein a user wins a prize in response obtaining a plurality of predetermined visual game pieces.

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25) An article of manufacture including a computer readable medium, comprising:

(a) a first software component for providing a value responsive to receiving an alphanumeric sequence from a first product;

- (b) a second software component for directing a user to a web site for purchasing a second product; and,
- (c) a third software component for purchasing the second product using the value.

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26) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

(d) a fourth software component for increasing the value responsive to a predetermined period of time.

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- 5            27) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

              (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value responsive to the second product being purchased in a predetermined geographic area.

10            28) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

              (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value responsive to a user answering a question.

15            29) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

              (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value responsive to a predetermined date.

20            30) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

              (d) a fourth software component for awarding a prize.

              31) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

              (d) a fourth software component for providing an opportunity to enter a sweepstake contest.

- 5           32) The article of manufacture of claim 25 further comprising:
- (d) a fourth software component for providing the user  
                 with a game piece associated with the alphanumeric  
                 sequence, and wherein a user wins a prize in  
                 response obtaining a plurality of predetermined game  
                 pieces.
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- 33) The article of manufacture of claim 25, wherein the computer  
                 readable medium is positioned in a processing device  
                 coupled to the Internet and a client processing device access  
                 the processing device.
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